

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 OIC-04 SP-03 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-07

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FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 QUITO 2622

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EC

SUBJECT: EDITORIAL COMMENT ON OAS/GA

1. THE APRIL 16 EDITION OF QUITO'S MORNING DAILY EL TIEMPO CARRIERS AS SIGNED EDITORIAL COMMENTARY ON THE FORTHCOMING OAS/GA BY JULIO PRADO VALLEJO. PRADO, A FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER, IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO EL TIEMPO AND AN INFLUENTIAL AND WIDELY READ COMMENTATOR. HIS REMARKS CONSTITUTE A SOMBER, PESSIMISTIC VIEW OF THE PROSPECTS FOR THE GA AND THE PRECEDING FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN WASHINGTON. HE FINDS THE LATTER MEETING "PREMATURE", WITH NO NEW ELEMENTS TO BE OFFERED BY EITHER SIDE, AND FEARS THAT THE WHOLE PROCESS OF DIALOGUE WILL BE DISCREDITED BY ITS FAILURE. AS FOR THE GA, "NOTHING EXCEPTIONAL CAN BE EXPECTED EITHER". THIS WILL SERVE TO UNDERSCORE THE FAILURE OF THE OAS AND, MORE SUBSTANTIVELY, THE FAILURE OF OAS GOVERNMENTS TO REFORM THE ORGANIZATION EFFECTIVELY. THE UNITED STATES IS NOT TO BE MADE A CONVENIENT SCAPEGOAT FOR THIS FAILURE; IT IS, RATHER, A PRODUCT OF THE "INCOMPETENCE" OF LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS. "THUS, RATHER THAN A REFORM OF THE REGIONAL BODY, A REFORM IS REQUIRED OF THE THOUGHT AND ACTIONS OF THE LA GOVERNMENTS." AND, "IN CONCLUSION, WE CAN HOPE FOR LITTLE OR

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NOTHING FROM THE GA TO BE HELD IN ATLANTA AND THE NEW

DISCUSSIONS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS WITH MR. KISSINGER".
FULL TEXT FOLLOWS.

2. A NEW GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE OAS IS ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE IN ATLANTA, UNITED STATES. DURING THE PRECEDING DAYS A NEW MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE OF THE AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS WITH MR. KISSINGER, SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES, IN WASHINGTON. IT IS A QUESTION OF CONTINUING THE DIALOGUE OF TLATELOLCO AND THEN DISCUSSING THE REGULAR MATTERS THAT ARE PENDING IN THE HIGHEST BODY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES. WHAT IS IMMEDIATELY APPARENT IN THESE DISCUSSIONS WITH MR. KISSINGER IS THAT THEY ARE PREMATURE. IT IS NOT VERY LONG SINCE THE AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MET IN MEXICO AND NOTHING NEW HAS SINCE TRANSPIRED TO WARRANT A FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE MATTERS WHICH WERE THEN DISCUSSED. WHAT NEW ELEMENTS CAN BE CONTRIBUTED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTERS ON MATTERS WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN DISCUSSED? AND NEITHER IS IT PROBABLE THAT MR. KISSINGER HAS ANYTHING THAT HE HAS NOT SAID BEFORE. THUS, IT IS TO BE FEARED THAT THE NEW MEETING OF LATIN AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE WILL NOT ACHIEVE ANYTHING CONSTRUCTIVE. AND IF THIS HAPPENS, IT WILL BE NATURAL FOR THE RECOURSE TO DIALOGUE TO LOSE PRESTIGE AND TO PRODUCE AN UNFORTUNATE WASTE OF A DIPLOMATIC EXPEDIENT WHICH, UNDER OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, WOULD BE PROFITABLE AND HIGHLY USEFUL.

3. IT SEEMS TO US, THEREFORE, THAT THE NEW MEETING AGREED UPON THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE IS PREMATURE. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER TO LET A LITTLE TIME PASS AND WAIT FOR THE RESULTS OF THE SPIRIT OF TLATELOLCO TO MATERIALIZE A BIT BEFORE UNDERTAKING FURTHER DELIBERATIONS. AS FOR THE REST, THE LATIN AMERICAN PEOPLES ARE EXPECTANT AND ARE WAITING TO LEARN THE FIRST RESULTS OF THE MEXICO AGREEMENT, WHICH WAS NOT AS PROMISING AS EXPECTED, BEFORE INDULGING IN DEMONSTRATIONS OF OPTIMISM. TO TELL THE TRUTH THERE IS, AT THIS TIME, NO EUPHORIA SUCH AS THAT WHICH COULD BE NOTED ON THE EVE OF THE TLATELOLCO MEETING. THE MEAGRE RESULTS AND THE SHORT TIME ELAPSED ARE
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THE BASIS FOR THE INDIFFERENCE WITH WHICH LATIN AMERICA IS ATTENDING THE NEW MEETING WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER.

4. AS FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE OAS TO BE HELD IN ATLANTA, NOTHIN EXCEPTIONAL CAN BE EXPECTED EITHER. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY WILL VERIFY THE FAILURE OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION ESTABLISHED TO STUDY MODIFICATIONS IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE OAS. THREE MEETINGS HAVE BEEN

HELD AND PRACTICALLY NO PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE. LENGTHY AND BORING STATEMENTS BY THE GOVERNMENTS, BUT NO POSITIVE FORMULA. THUS, IT IS OBVIOUS, ON THIS OCCASION, THE OAS HAS ONCE AGAIN FAILED. AND THIS, WITHOUT DOUBT, IS A FAILURE OF THE GOVERNMENTS THEMSELVES, WHICH HAVE NOT FOUND A WAY OF FILLING THE GAPS AND CORRECTING THE DEFECTS OF THE SYSTEMS. ALL KINDS OF COMPLAINTS HAVE BEEN VOICED THAT THE OAS DOES NOT WORK, AND CERTAIN GOVERNMENTS HAVE BECOME THE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING THE BOMBASTIC PROCLAMATIONS WITH WHICH THEY ANNOUNCED THEIR POSITIONS, THE DELIVERATIONS HAVE ENDED UP IN THE MOST RESOUNDING FIASCO. WHAT HAPPENED IS THE CLEAREST SYMPTOM OF THE DIVISION WHICH AILS LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS AS REGARDS THEIR APPROACH TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE REGIONAL BODY. NEVER BEFORE HAS THE LACK OF UNANIMITY ON MATTERS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE FOR THE LIFE OF THE OAS BEEN SO EVIDENT.

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5. AND LET US NOT CHOOSE THE EASY EXPEDIENT OF BLAMING THE UNITED STATES, ON THIS OCCASION, FOR THE FAILURE OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION'S DELIBERATIONS. ON NOT A FEW OCCASIONS THE LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS HAVE SOUGHT TO JUSTIFY THEIR OWN INCOMPATENCE WITH THE EXCUSE THAT THE OAS DOESN'T WORK THROUGH FAULT OF THE UNITED STATES. WE NOW SEE THAT THE REFORMS WHICH WERE ANNOUNCED WITH

SUCH FANFARE ARE MAKING NO PROGRESS BECAUSE OF THE DIVISION AMONG LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS AND THEIR INABILITY TO FIND FORMULAS WHICH WOULD REVITALIZE THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM. THE ATLANTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS GOING TO BE FACED WITH THIS REALITY AND IT WILL PROBABLY HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME IN DRAFTING A PROGRESSIVE REFORM AND OVERCOMING THE IMPASSE IN THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

6. IN ANY EVENT A NEW INITIATIVE WILL BE REQUIRED TO OVERCOME THE STAGNATION PARALYZING THE REFORM OF THE REGIONAL SYSTEM. IT IS EVIDENT THAT TIME HAS BEEN WASTED IN DISCUSSIONS WHICH HAVE MERELY REVEALED PROFOUND DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AND WHICH PUT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN A DIFFICULT POSITION TO TAKE ANY CONSTRUCTIVE ACTION REGARDING THE NEED FOR A RESTRUCTURING OF THE OAS. THIS IS A DISAPPOINTMENT FOR THE LATIN AMERICAN
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PEOPLES, AND IT IS SERIOUSLY ERDING GOOD WILL TOWARD THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM. AND ONCE AGAIN IT HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED THAT THE DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS SITUATION LIES WITH THE GOVERNMENTS THEMSELVES. THEREFORE, LET NO BLAME BE LAID AT THE DOOR OF THE OAS OR OF THE UNITED STATES. THUS, BEFORE A REFORM OF THE REGIONAL BODY, A REFORM IS REQUIRED OF THE THOUGHTS AND DEEDS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH, ON THIS OCCASION, HAVE GIVEN A MOST OBVIOUS DEMONSTRATION OF INCOMPETENCE.

7. THE ATLANTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY WILL SURELY FEEL THE IMPACT OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS OF THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS WHICH, EITHER OPENLY OR BEHIND THE SCENES, HAVE NOMINATED CANDIDATES TO REPLACE THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OAS, MR. GALO PLAZA. DURING THE NEXT FEW MONTHS WE SHALL BE WATCHING A PLAY OF PRESSURES AIMED AT SECURING VOTES FOR THIS OR THAT CANDIDATE. THE PRESENT SECRETARY GENERAL WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH MUCH DURING THE SHORT PERIOD YET REMAINING BEFORE THE EXPIRATION OF HIS TERM. AND IT HAS BEEN PAINFUL TO SEE HOW RANCOROUSLY PANAMA HAS ATTACKED, AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY, THE HIGHEST-RANKING OFFICER OF THE OAS. WE CANNOT ADEQUATELY EXPLAIN TO OURSELVES THIS RECALCITRANT PANAMANIAN POSITION. IT IS FAR FROM CONSTRUCTIVE, AND IT BETRAYS A PERSONAL INCLINATION AGAINST MR. PLAZA.

8. IN CONCLUSION, WE CAN HOPE FOR LITTLE OR NOTHING FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO BE HELD IN ATLANTA AND THE NEW DISCUSSIONS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS WITH MR. KISSINGER.

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